Colonial Times: Short Nonfiction for American History (Toolkit Texts)

Stephanie Harvey, Anne Goudvis

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"We turn information into knowledge by thinking about it. These texts support students in using the Toolkit's comprehension and thinking strategies as tools to acquire and actively use knowledge in history."

-Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis

To support cross-curricular strategy instruction and close reading for information, Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis have expanded their *Toolkit Texts* series to include a library of short nonfiction for American history with 10 all-new Toolkit lessons.

Building on selections from popular children's magazines as well as original articles, these engaging, age-appropriate texts will keep your active literacy classroom awash in historical resources that depict the controversies, issues, and dramas that shaped historical events, including the exploits of lesser-known individuals.

These short nonfiction texts for American history include:

- **10 comprehension strategy lessons** for close reading in content literacy.
- **Short nonfiction articles** on a wide range of topics and at a variety of reading levels.
  (45 articles in Colonial Times and 52 articles in The American Revolution and Constitution)
- **A bank** of historical images, primary source documents and artifacts, plus primary source documents and artifacts bibliographies, web sites, and ideas for online investigations.
- **A Digital Companion Resource** provides all of the texts, primary source documents, and the image bank in a full-color digital format so you can display them for group analysis.

Lesson	Title
1	**Read and Annotate:** Stop, think, and react using a variety of strategies to understand
2	**Annotate Images:** Expand understanding and learning from visuals
3	**Build Background to Understand a Primary Source:** Read and paraphrase secondary sources to create a context for a topic
4	**Read and Analyze a Primary Source:** Focus on what you know and ask questions to clarify and explain
5	**Compare Perspectives:** Explore the different life experiences of historical figures
6	**Read Critically:** Consider point of view and bias
7	**Organize Historical Thinking:** Create a question web
8	**Read with a Question in Mind:** Focus on central ideas
9	**Surface Common Themes:** Infer the big ideas across several texts
10	**Synthesize Information to Argue a Point:** Use claim, evidence, and reasoning

The CCSS and other state standards expect that children will read a variety of texts on a common topic and synthesize the ideas and information.

These short nonfiction texts were selected using the following criteria:

Interest/Content	Because kids love the quirky and the unexpected, these texts highlight important but often lesser-known or unrecognized perspectives and voices from the past.
Visual literacy	Since visual literacy is an essential 21st-century skill, these texts include historical images, paintings, and maps, as well as diagrams, timelines, charts, and photographs.
Writing quality and accuracy	To foster student engagement, these articles feature vibrant language in an active voice supported by a rich assortment of visual features.
Reading level/complexity	These texts are written at a range of reading levels and include a wide variety of topics to capture the interests of all readers.

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